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Letter dated 2 April 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the most recent dangerous incidents that have occurred along Israel's northern border.

This afternoon, Hizbullah terrorists launched mortar, anti-tank and anti-aircraft fire from southern Lebanon at three Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) positions in the Mount Dov region. There were no casualties. This attack represents the fourth attack launched against Israel from Lebanon in as many days.

Last night, Hizbullah terrorists fired at least one 107 mm Katyusha rocket at a civilian target in the Galilee region of northern Israel. The rocket landed just north of the Israeli city of Kiryat Shmona, a city that has often been a favoured target of Hizbullah rockets. Residents reported hearing two powerful explosions that spread terror throughout the area. No casualties were reported.

This attack follows an attempted infiltration into the Western Galilee from Lebanon late Sunday evening, 31 March 2002. Under cover of darkness, four terrorists approached the security fence from the Lebanese side of the border and opened fire with rocket propelled grenades and automatic rifles at Israeli soldiers near Moshav Zar'it. This attack took place not far from where terrorists crossed the Lebanese border and killed six Israeli civilians on 12 March, in an incident referred to in my letter dated 21 March 2002 (A/56/884-S/2002/301).

On Saturday, 30 March 2002, in an unprovoked attack, Hizbullah terrorists opened fire on Israeli positions in the Mount Dov region. In the afternoon hours, dozens of mortar rounds and anti-tank missiles were fired from Lebanon at six IDF outposts on the Israeli side of the Blue Line. Although no casualties were reported, hundreds of visitors had to be evacuated from the area as the IDF responded to Hizbullah's aggression. In a statement broadcast on Hizbullah's Al-Manar television station, the organization announced that the attack was part of its support of the Palestinians.

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In his statement to the Security Council yesterday, the Secretary-General made the following comments in reference to recent attacks emanating from Lebanese territory:

> "There have also been worrying developments along the Blue Line. On two occasions there have been attacks from the Lebanese side of the Blue Line. First, there was a serious violation of the Blue Line by Hezbollah, which launched mortars and rockets against the Sha'ba farms area.
>
> Late yesterday, there was a shooting attack against an IDF position in Israel from the Lebanese side of the Blue Line, a further violation. In both cases Israel responded. I would like to stress that the Security Council, acting unanimously, has confirmed Israel's full withdrawal from all occupied territory in southern Lebanon. The Blue Line should not be violated by any party."

These incidents come amidst a number of alarming statements made by Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary-General of Hizbullah, who has recently upgraded his rhetoric in support of Palestinian terrorism and armed aggression against the State of Israel. Sheikh Nasrallah has admitted to attempting to smuggle weapons through the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to terrorists in the Palestinian territories and has vowed to continue to escalate attacks against Israel. Furthermore, we have received information in the last two days of a massive Hizbullah deployment of weapons and fighters in close proximity to the Blue Line, clearly indicating preparations for further attacks against Israel.

These worrisome developments come on the heels of several other recent attacks perpetrated by Hizbullah that were referred to in my letter dated 21 March 2002 (A/56/884-S/2002/301). Earlier Hizbullah attacks were detailed in my letters dated 24 January 2002 (A/56/793-S/2002/115) and 17 January 2002 (A/56/778-S/2002/79), and a spate of other attacks that were detailed in my letters dated 24 October 2001 (A/56/507-S/2001/1012), 5 October 2001 (A/56/443-S/2001/942), 6 July 2001 (A/56/161-S/2001/673), 16 April 2001 (S/2001/367), 16 February 2001 (A/55/792-S/2001/142), 6 February 2001 (A/55/767-S/2001/111), 26 November 2000 (S/2000/1121), 23 October 2000 (S/2000/1011), 19 October 2000 (S/2000/1002) and 7 October 2000 (S/2000/969).

Rather than fulfil its obligations under Security Council resolutions 425 (1978), 426 (1978), 1310 (2000), 1337 (2001), 1365 (2001) and 1391 (2002), the Government of Lebanon has effectively ceded control of the South Lebanon to Hizbullah and permitted the organization to plan and carry out terrorist attacks against Israeli civilian and military targets at will. The Government of Lebanon is also in violation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the principles of international law, which clearly calls upon all States to refrain from providing any support, whether active or passive, to all persons or entities involved in terrorist acts.

It should be emphasized that Hizbullah's continuing illegal operations against Israel are possible not only because of Lebanon's support and complicity, but also due to the financial, political and logistical assistance provided by the Governments of Syria and Iran, both of which are countries with lengthy and well-known records of support for terrorist activities.

Under the current tense circumstances in the region, these developments must be a source of great concern to the international community. Hizbullah is clearly

acting with the intent to build on the hostilities initiated by Palestinian terrorists to set off a much broader confrontation in the region. It is absolutely essential that concerted international pressure be brought to bear immediately upon the Governments of Lebanon, Syria and the Islamic Republic of Iran to urge them to restrain Hizbullah and prevent further deterioration of regional stability. It must be made unambiguously clear to these Governments that terrorist organizations like Hizbullah will not be permitted to flout the will of the Security Council and the principles of international law and to further endanger civilian lives throughout the region. These Governments must further bear full responsibility for Hizbullah's actions and for the potentially far-reaching consequences for regional peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative